

Schuylkill Action Network (PA)
EPA Region 3 - Philadelphia - Water Protection Division

Geographic location or area of activity: Schuylkill Watershed, Southeastern PA

Description of activity: Formed in 2003, the Schuylkill Action Network (SAN) is a unique partnership of 100+ organizations. An Executive Steering Committee, includes EPA Region 3 (lead), the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the Delaware River Basin Commission, Philadelphia Water Department and the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, operates the SAN. The mission of the SAN is to improve the water resources of the Schuylkill River Watershed by working in partnership with state agencies, local watershed organizations, land conservation organizations, businesses, academics, water suppliers, local governments, regional agencies and the federal government to transcend regulatory and jurisdictional boundaries in the strategic implementation of protection measures.

The historic Schuylkill River is not only a working river but also the source of drinking water for more than 1.5 million people. At 130 miles long, with more than 180 tributaries, the Schuylkill drains 2,000 square miles of southeastern Pennsylvania and is the largest tributary to the Delaware Estuary. Industrialization and mining in the 19th and 20th centuries left the Schuylkill as one of the nation's most polluted rivers.

In recent years the river's water quality has improved and migratory fish are returning, but problems remain. Major causes of degradation include stormwater runoff, agricultural practices, abandoned mine drainage and sewage overflows. Of the 2,700 miles of streams that have been assessed for the aquatic life use support, 900 miles are impaired.

A near-term restoration initiative was developed to address stormwater runoff, agricultural practices and abandoned mine drainage; to promote market-based strategies and to evaluate the efficacy of the Schuylkill Action Network as an interjurisdictional approach to water quality management. The \$1.5 million EPA Targeted Watersheds Grant, which is matched by watershed partners with \$626,925, will be used to achieve four specific goals:

- Achieve measurable pollution reductions
- Provide a model SDWA & CWA Program Integration
- Implement, over 3 years, more than 40 demonstration projects relating to stormwater impacts, agricultural impacts, abandoned mine drainage impacts, and market-based strategies.

Successes

- Agriculture Implementation Activities
 - 32,000 feet of streambank fencing
 - 6,000 feet of streamside plantings
 - 15 Conservation plans completed
 - 9 farm BMPs completed, 6 in process
- Abandoned Mine Drainage Treatment Systems Completed
- Reevesdale Tunnel Remediation (900 GPM)
- Mary D Mine Discharge (5,000 GPM)
- Pine Forest Remediation (5,000 GPM)

- Otto Mine Drainage Treatment (2,600 GPM)
- Bell Colliery Treatment System (1,000 GPM)
- Monitoring Water Quality and Flow Study
- Pathogen Control and Compliance
 - Wastewater Cryptosporidium Study
 - 67 plants
 - City of Reading Consent Decree - \$100M Upgrade
- Watershed Land Protection Collaborative Team
- Developed Schuylkill Watershed Land Prioritization Tool for source water protection

Interagency partners: EPA Region 3, USDA, Corps of Engineers, Delaware River Basin Commission, PADEP, PADCNr

Local partners: Philadelphia Water Department, County Government, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, Watershed Associations, Universities, Water Suppliers, and private individuals.

Activity URL: www.schuylkillactionnetwork.org



Berks County, PA - Stream bank fencing, cattle crossing and riparian buffer